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OSTRANDER, McDONNELL AND LEWIS
SS

BLOOD & NOW

PART TWO

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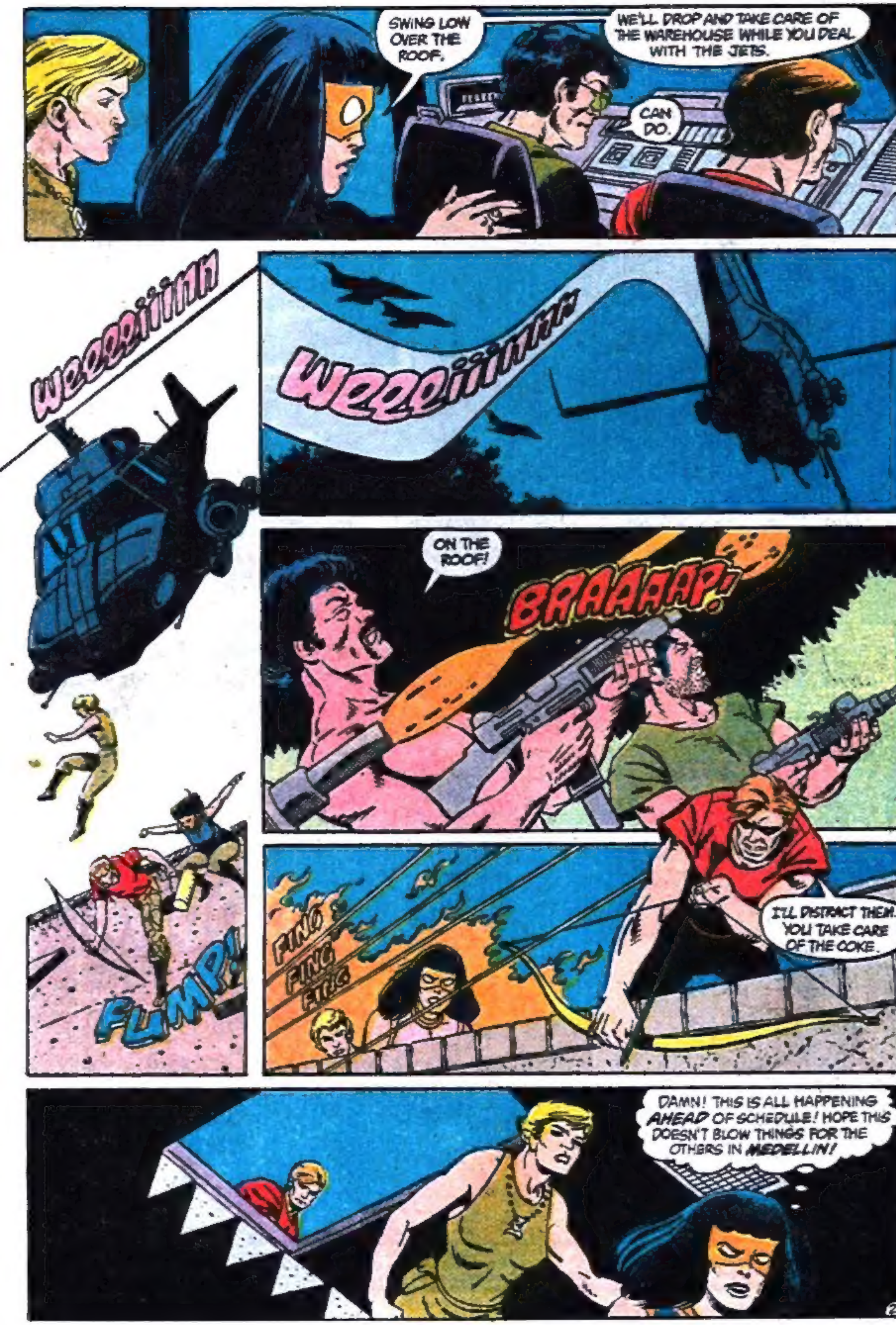


SWING LOW OVER THE ROOF.
WE'LL DROP AND TAKE CARE OF THE WAREHOUSE WHILE YOU DEAL WITH THE JETS.
CAN DO.
WEEEIIIINN
WEEEIIIINN
ON THE ROOF!
BRAAAAP!
FUMP!
FING
FING
FING
I'LL DISTRACT THEM. YOU TAKE CARE OF THE COKE.
DAMN! THIS IS ALL HAPPENING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE! HOPE THIS DOESN'T BLOW THINGS FOR THE OTHERS IN MEDELLIN!

MEDELLIN. THE HOUSE OF XAVIER CUJO.

NO WORRIES! I GOT THIS CUJO GALAH BELIEVIN' I WANT T'DO BUSINESS *WITH* HIM AND THAT YOU TWO SHEILAS WILL BE GOIN' INTA BUSINESS *FOR* HIM.

IF ALL GOES T' *PLAN*, HE'LL BE DEAD AND WE'LL BE GONE B'FORE YOU TWO HAVE TO...shhhh... *DEMONSTRATE* YER GOODS!

I'D THOUGHT MYSELF *CLEAR* OF THE *TANTU TOTEM*, CLEAR OF THE ANIMAL POWERS THAT MADE ME *VIXEN*--CLEAR OF THE *RAGE* THAT NEARLY *MADE ME* AN ANIMAL.*

BUT I'VE COME HERE TO *INVOKE* THE TOTEM AGAIN--TO KILL CUJO, AN ACT WHICH MAY *BIND* ME TO THE TOTEM FOREVER. ALL TO AVENGE AN INNOCENT HE CALLOUSLY, *CASUALLY* HAD KILLED.**

I COULD HAVE LEFT IT TO OTHERS. BUT I *INSISTED* SO AS TO ASSUAGE THE ANGER, THE *OUTRAGE* I FEEL WITHIN ME. I FEAR THE TRUTH IS THAT--DEEP DOWN--I NEVER *STOPPED* BEING *VIXEN*.

*AS SEEN IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA. **AS SEEN LAST ISSUE.--BOB

GOT YER OUTFIT RIGHT 'ERE. IT'S A CINCH Y' COULDN'T HAVE SNUCK IT IN *HERSELF*.

I MEAN, WHERE'D YOU *PUT* IT, EH?

DON'T KNOW IF I'LL *GIVE* IT TO YOU. Y'BEEN *CHEEKY* WITH ME, DARLIN'. SERVE YA RIGHT IF Y'HAD T'FIGHT CUJO AND HIS MOB ALL *STARKERS*, EH?

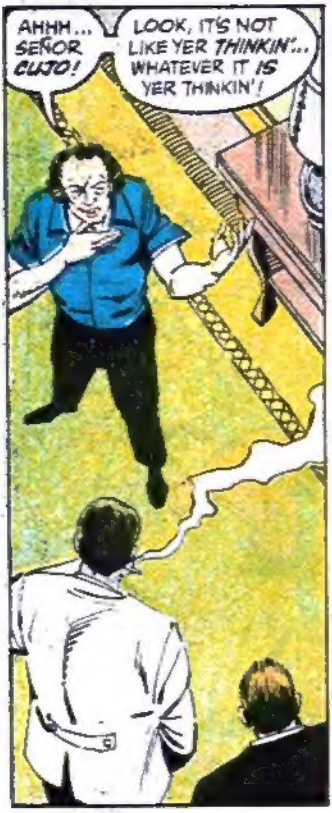
TELL ME WHY I SHOULD BE NICE T' *YOU*.

GURK!

FWIP!

URK!

AHH, *TAKE* IT, YA BLOODY *BIKE*!



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WE TOOK YOUR FINGERPRINTS FROM THE GLASS THIS AFTERNOON AND HAD MY INTERPOL INFORMER RUN A CHECK. THIS IS GOOD BUSINESS FOR US--TO BE SURE WE KNOW WITH WHOM WE ARE DEALING.
YOUR NAME IS NOT HILARY--IT IS HAKKNESS. THIS MAKES ME SUSPICIOUS. I COME HERE TO QUESTION THE WOMEN AND FIND YOU. AND I BECOME MORE SUSPICIOUS.
OF COURSE I DIDN'T GIVE ME RIGHT NAME! BLOODY HELL! I NEED TO BE CAUTIOUS TOO!
IT SAYS YOU ARE A PETTY COSTUMED CROOK. NOT THE DRUG DEALER YOU PRESENTED YOURSELF TO BE.
WHO'S PETTY?
I DECIDED TO INVEST ME TIME AND ENERGY WHERE IT WOULD BE MORE PROFITABLE. ANY LAW AGAINST A MAN BETTERIN' HIMSELF?
AS FER BEIN' HERE WITH THE SHEILAS--WELL, WE'VE ALL GOTTEN VERY CLOSE, Y'SEE? FOND O' EACH OTHER.
THAT MAKES THE GIFT WORTH SO MUCH, SEE? THE LOVE WE SHARE!
PLAY ALONG OR IT'S ALL OUR NECKS!
WE'RE ALMOST ENGAGED, ME GIRLS AND ME!
PUCKER UP AND MAKE IT CONVINCING, Y'BLOODY BIKE.
SEÑOR CUJO, A MESSAGE CAME IN FOR YOUR EAR ONLY.
NO TONGUE!
'EY! WHAT'S ALL THAT, THEN?!
CLIK
5

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED WORD MY FORTRESS IN THE JUNGLE IS UNDER ATTACK. MY SUSPICIONS OF YOU AND YOUR WOMEN HAVE REACHED A MOST TERMINAL STAGE, SEÑOR.
THAT'S JUST A BLOODY COINCIDENCE, INNIT? IT DON'T PROVE NOTHIN'!
PROOF? THIS IS NO COURT OF LAW, SEÑOR.
I SUSPECT YOU. IT IS SAFER TO JUST KILL YOU.
WAIT. WHERE IS THE OTHER WOMAN?
BRUJO, CHECK THE BATHROOM.
LOCKED, SEÑOR. BUT WE WILL OPEN IT.
BUDDABUDDA
BRAAAP
BUK CHOW!
KRASH!

WHO--?!
BRAAAP!
FING!
SPEEEDOOO!
NEVER MIND! JUST KILL HER!!!
WHAM!
WOK!
CUJO'S ESCAPING!
THEN GO DO HIM, YA STUPID CHROMO!
KRAK!
I GOT BUSINESS T' TEND TO HERE!
SNRRRLLL

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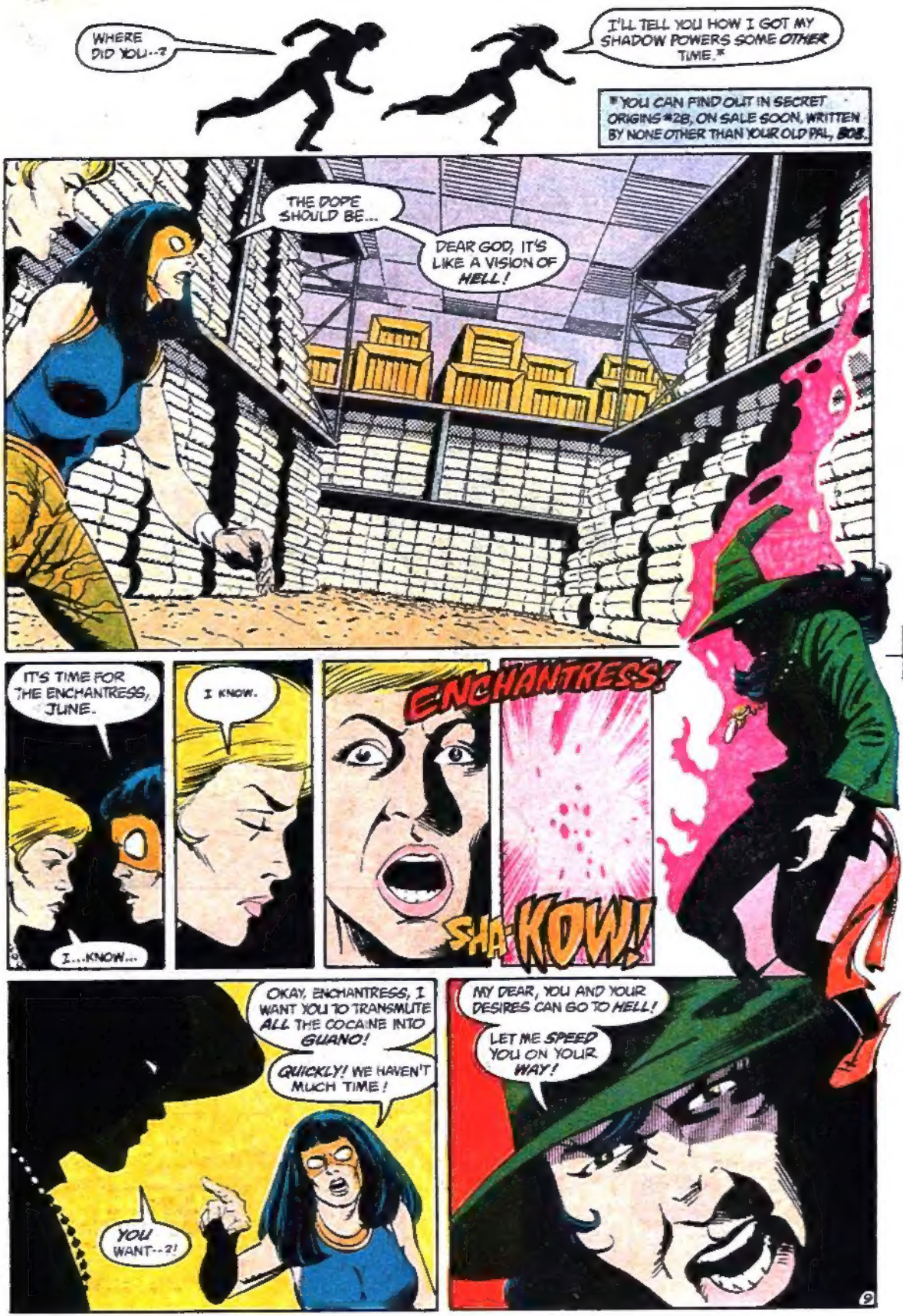
WHERE DID YOU--?
I'LL TELL YOU HOW I GOT MY SHADOW POWERS SOME OTHER TIME.*
*YOU CAN FIND OUT IN SECRET ORIGINS #28, ON SALE SOON, WRITTEN BY NONE OTHER THAN YOUR OLD PAL, BOB.
THE DOPE SHOULD BE...
DEAR GOD, IT'S LIKE A VISION OF HELL!
IT'S TIME FOR THE ENCHANTRESS, JUNE.
I...KNOW...
I KNOW.
ENCHANTRESS!
SHA-KOW!
OKAY, ENCHANTRESS, I WANT YOU TO TRANSMUTE ALL THE COCAINE INTO GUANO!
QUICKLY! WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME!
YOU WANT--?!
MY DEAR, YOU AND YOUR DESIRES CAN GO TO HELL!
LET ME SPEED YOU ON YOUR WAY!

SORRY! BUT THE BRONZE TIGER LEANT ME MADAME XANADU'S RING!
SHRAKOWWW!
GYAAAHHH!
DAMN THEM AND DAMN YOU! AND DAMN THIS NECKLACE!
AGGGHHH!
NEITHER YOU OR JUNE CAN TAKE THAT THING OFF, ENCHANTRESS.
WE'RE HERE TO COMPLETE A MISSION AND YOU'RE GOING TO DO YOUR PART! SO STOP SCREWING AROUND AND DO IT!
OVER YOUR DEAD BODY!!!

CRIPES! YOU GET SO USED TO HER JUST USING HER MAGIC YOU FORGET HOW FAST SHE IS...!
OR...HOW... STRONG!!!
GIVE ME THE RING!!!
GO...TO... HELL!
THEN I'LL RIP OFF YOUR HAND!
I'LL RIP OFF YOUR WHOLE HAND!
CAN'T SPARE IT.
HERE'S SOME BOOT INSTEAD!
WHAM!
YEEARGGH!

KRUNK
HAH!
KRAK!
HUUE!
CHOK!
CHUD!
STICK TO YOUR BAILIWICK, ENCHANTRESS. HAND TO HAND COMBAT'S MINE!
NOW DO AS I TOLD YOU OR YOU'RE A GREASE SPOT ON THE FLOOR!
12

NOW, WITCH!
...DAMN YOU...!
FRA-KOWWW!
GOOD GIRL! NOW SAY YOUR NAME OR I'LL POP YOUR NECK!
SAY IT!!!
I'LL HAVE REVENGE ON YOU ALL IF I HAVE TO DESTROY THE UNIVERSE TO DO IT!!!
AHHH. ENCHANTRESS!
SPAKOW!
OW! OW! OWOWOWOWOW! EEEEVE! IT'S ME! GO STOP ALREADY!
SORRY I HAD TO BE SURE
JOB'S DONE, BRISCOE. COME AND GET US!
BRISCOE? ARE YOU THERE?

CALL ME BACK.
WE GOT SOME TROUBLE.
BAM!
SHWOMP!
SHEBAAAAA!
JHWUP
JHWUP
DIRTY MUTHAHHHHS! YOU HURT SHEBA!
BRADADADADADADADADA!
BBBBBB BOOOMMMM!
MEDELLIN.
STREWTH! DAMN THE KACK!
LOOK, DARLIN', I ONLY BROUGHT A LIMITED NUMBER OF BOOMERANGS AND I'M ABOUT OUT, SEE?
THAT MAR! SHEILA WAN'S CUJO? FINE! LET 'ER GET HIM! BUT WHY SHOULD WE DRAW THE CRABS WHILE SHE DOES IT?

WHAT!
NOT THAT FAST, Y'BLOODY BIKE!
CRAP!
CRAP!
CRAP!
CRAP!
CRAP!
BRAAAAAP!
ERNESTO! GO BRING THE CAR AROUND!
YOU HEAR?!
WHAP!
WHO--?
SNRRRLLL

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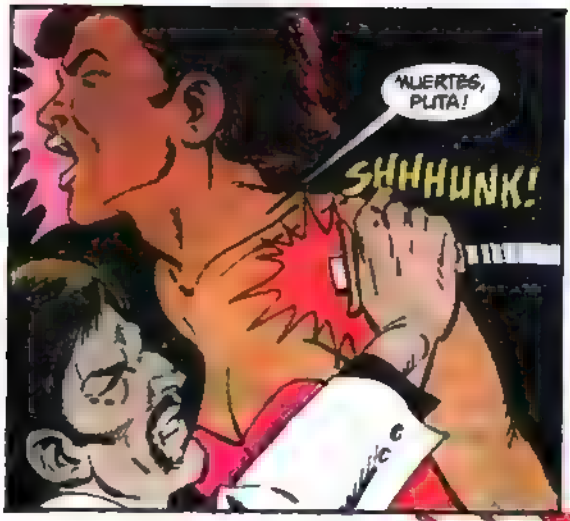
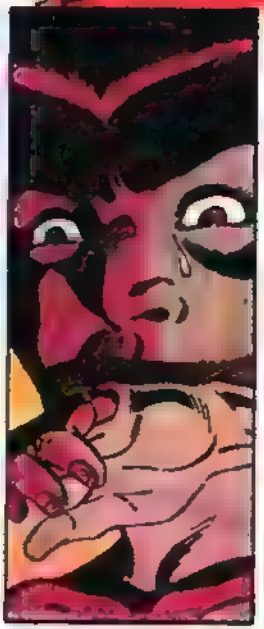

MUERTES, PUTA!
SHHHUNK!

HAWROOOO!

SNAP

YOU...!
I—!!



PUTA! WHAT DID YOU DO TO SEÑOR CLIJO?!

I.. KILLED HIM...

THEN DIE WITH HIM!
QUE ES--?
I KILLED HIM, ORCHID.
I... KILLED...
WOOOSH!!
I THINK I'VE LOST 'EM FOR THE GEC.
IS THAT--? FL'PPIN' HELL, IT IS!
THE STREET VALUE OF THAT BUNDLE! I'M RICH!
RICH!
BADADADADA
NO, YA BLOODY BIKE!
PUT ME DOWN!
THAT'S ME FORTUNE! PUT ME DOWWWWWNN!

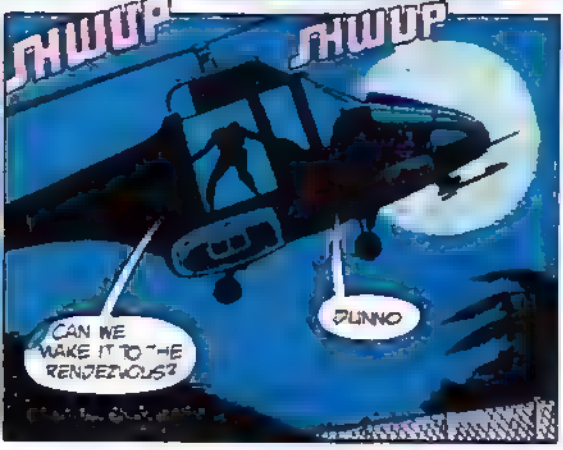
SOB! AH HAH HAH IS IT WAS ALMOST IN ME HANDS!
..MILLIONS.. MILLIONS!

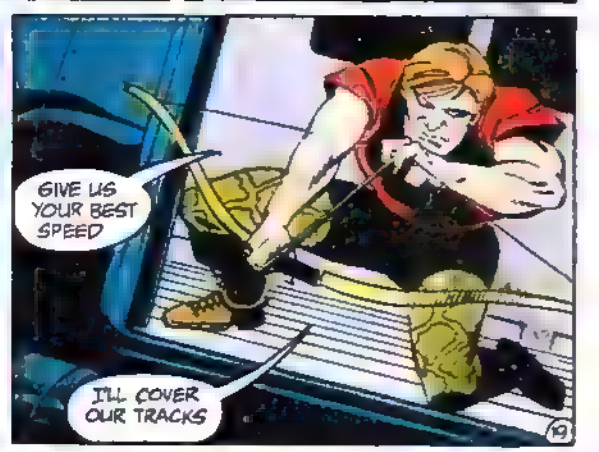
..LEMME DIE.. JUST.. LEMME DIE..!
WAAAAAAAAH

CUJO'S FORTRESS

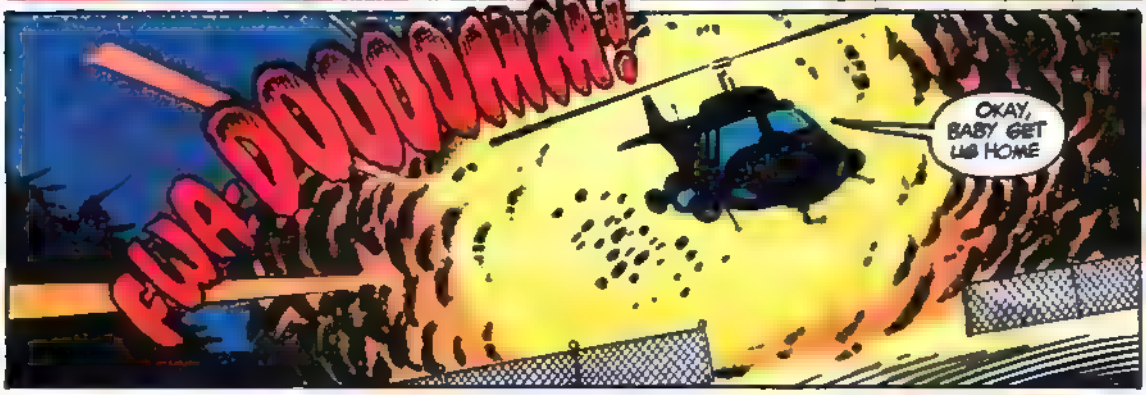
WE'RE FINISHED YOU?
LAST CHARGE SET WHERE'S THE CHOPPER?

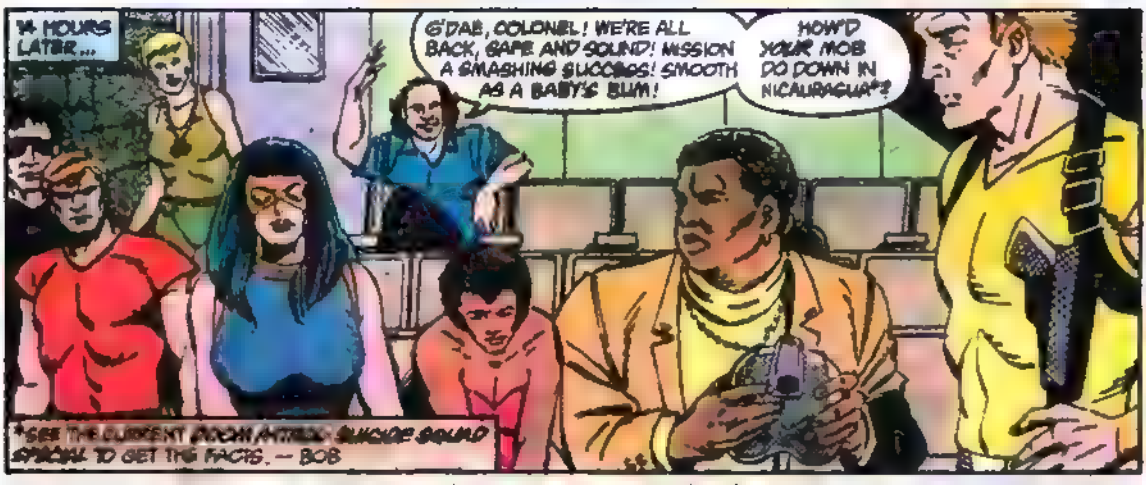
THEY HURT SHEBA.


SHWUP
SHWUP
CAN WE MAKE IT TO THE RENDEZVOUS?
DUNNO


GIVE US YOUR BEST SPEED
I'LL COVER OUR TRACKS

TWANG


FWA-DOOOOMM!
OKAY, BABY GET US HOME


14 HOURS LATER...
G'DAB, COLONEL! WE'RE ALL BACK, SAFE AND SOUND! MISSION A SMASHING SUCCESS! SMOOTH AS A BABY'S BUM!
HOW'D YOUR MOB DO DOWN IN NICARAGUA*?
*SEE THE CURRENT ROCKY ANTHOLOGY SUICIDE SQUAD SPECIAL TO GET THE FACTS. — BOB

RICK? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

RICK?!
LEAVE HIM BE, GIRL. COLONEL FLAG WAS THE ONLY ONE TO SURVIVE THE MISSION.

DEAR GOD! OH, RICK...!
THE ONLY ONE?!
STRUTTIN! THAT'S A BIT THICK, INNIT? EVEN BY SQUAD STANDARDS!
IT WASN'T HIS FAULT

THINGS WENT BETTER WITH YOU PEOPLE, I UNDERSTAND
CUJO'S DEAD HIS COCAINE IS GUANO HIS FORTRESS WAS RAZED
AND EVERYONE CAME BACK
YOU DONE GOOD. ALL OF YOU
I HEARD GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOU, TOO, MS. MCCABE. I KNOW IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN EASY FOR YOU
WE COULD USE YOU ON THE SQUAD REGULAR. YOU INTERESTED?
WORK WITH CRIMINALS .. LIVE IN A PRISON ... MAYBE GET MYSELF KILLED FOR BAD MONEY AND NO GLORY.
SURE
WHY NOT?
GLAD YOU'RE HAPPY, MRS. WALLER. BECAUSE WE DIDN'T REALLY ACHIEVE ANYTHING.
WHAT WE DID JUST MEANS THEY'LL BE A TEMPORARY SHORTAGE AND SOME HIGH-PAID PEOPLE WITH EXPENSIVE HABITS WILL GET JITTERY.
THE OTHER DRUG LORDS WILL STEP UP PRODUCTION. IN MAYBE EIGHT MONTHS THINGS WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL
DON'T GET ME WRONG. YOU DID GOOD WORK, PEOPLE. IT'S JUST NOT ENOUGH.
IT NEVER IS.
SO LONG AS PEOPLE KEEP SHOVELLING SNOW UP THEIR NOSES, THE PROBLEM'S GOING TO CONTINUE
UNLESS, OF COURSE, WE NUKE MEDELLIN.
SEE YA
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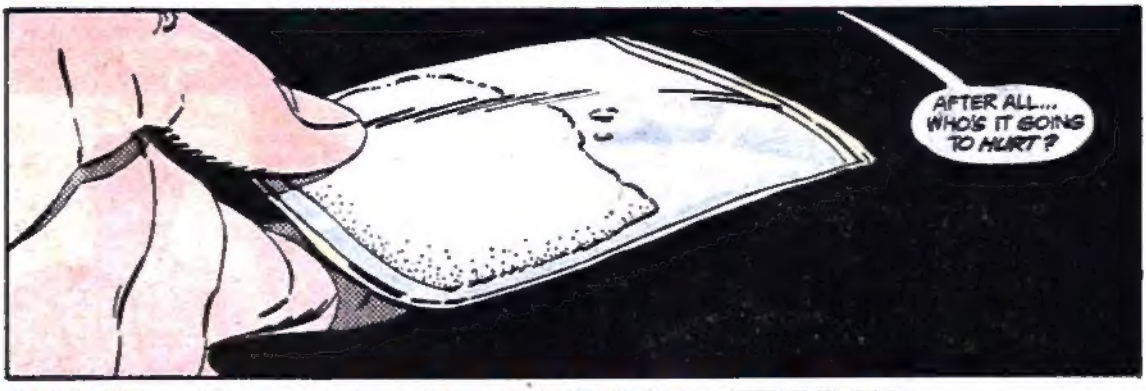

NEXT: JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL

SUICIDE NOTES

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Dear Bob,

"Personal Files" was probably the best issue so far. I always like issues where we see the characters' private lives to a greater extent, so I really enjoyed this issue.

Amanda Waller's segment was especially good, showing how important the Squad is to her, and how, despite herself, she is starting to really care for its various members. This is understandable when you remember her tragic past.

How I laughed when Amanda hit Tolliver! It was so in character but so unexpected.

The Rick Flag bit was probably the only part of the story that wasn't so good. It was going fine until Privateer turned up. It seemed as if the fight between the two had been put in just to provide some violence.

The highlight of the issue was the Enchantress sequence. Enchantress is one of my favorite super-heroines and Madame Xanadu is the favorite of mine, so it was nice to see them together. The idea of the necklace and ring to control June Moone's evil persona is a good one—here's hoping they don't fall into the wrong hands!

Deadshot's couple of pages were interesting enough. About time we have some romance in this book.

Captain Boomerang is really despicable. Masquerading as a recently-dead friend. I don't really like Digger, although I suppose he does provide a spot of humor.

Gary Hellen
7 Chestnut Grove
Brentwood, Essex CM14 4XH
United Kingdom

*****

Dear Suicidal Maniacs,

"Personal Files" was a very intriguing look at what the Suicide Squad does when they aren't operating as a whole. It may not have been as full of action as the last few issues, but it held my attention all the way through.

I greatly enjoyed how Mrs. Waller gave Tolliver what he deserved. After what he did during the Firestorm incident, I was surprised that he didn't see Waller's fist in his face sooner. I'm now very curious as to how he plans on covering his rear.

I now give the Privateer a heartfelt welcome. I've been wishing for someone to give him some attention lately. I hope you'll handle him well and not kill him off. By the way, who created him?

The explanation of how June Moone's aura was eroding satisfied me to a T. It was totally logical. I now see a bright future ahead for the Enchantress. But will June ever fall in love with anyone? A good boyfriend (or spouse) could give her support and guidance in her time of need.

The one thing I didn't like was how you brought back Mirror Master. After he had died, I missed him very little. Now you've put Captain Boomerang in his suit and are calling it Cap's new hobby. It just doesn't seem right. And what if he gets caught? Farewell New Orleans, hello Belle Reve.

Two questions: where is Nightshade this issue? Second, since the letters for this issue should be printed around the time of this title's first anniversary, are there any plans for SUICIDE SQUAD ANNUAL #1?

Paul Cieslewicz
439 County K
Custer, WI 54423

Jack Kirby first breathed life into Mark Shaw, back in FIRST ISSUE SPECIAL #1. Steve Englehart then rounded him out as the Star-Tsar and the Privateer about 10 years back. Now, John Ostrander is in command of the new Manhunter's destiny as you will see in MANHUNTER #1, this spring!

Since we have some extensive plans for Nightshade, we felt that deleting her from #8 wouldn't hurt too much. We just didn't have the space for everyone.

Speaking of plans, John and I recently completed some meetings regarding the direction of this series from #13-25, including the Annual, a spin-off mini-series (featuring?—just wait) and tying up loads of loose ends. The Annual is set for late summer and will be worth the wait.

*****

Dear DC,

I'm not quite sure what to make of SUICIDE SQUAD #8. It was both good and bad, perhaps slightly confusing. It certainly wasn't the best issue of the series. Perhaps part of the reason I feel this way is because recently JUSTICE LEAGUE had an issue where the team got a bit of a break from crime fighting and world saving, but they made theirs humorous. A bit of humor might have helped.

The good points about SS #8 include: it helps wrap everything that's happened so far together, and it sets up future issues as well; an appearance by the Privateer; Captain Boomerang committing crimes again, this time as Mirror Master—he's not the type of guy who'd just give up crime to be an adventurer. I wonder how long it will take Mrs. Waller to suspect that Captain Boomerang is the Mirror Master. This segment does have some humor, and was my favorite part of the story. Simon LaGrieve has been an interesting character, as well. The art, as usual, was well done. The characters look real.

The bad points include: I'm getting a little sick of Rick Flag's outbursts, but he should still be in command—seeing Bronze Tiger in command could be interesting, and make up for all this; the whole June Moone/Enchantress sequence was dull, and definitely too long; either let her control the Enchantress or dump her. The sequence with Marnie Herrs and Deadshot was a little cliched.

Well, after looking at it again, my conclusion is that SS #8 was a good issue with more faults than usual. Overall, the series is one of my favorites, and I want to see it stay that way. Keep it fresh, innovative and make the changes believable.

Stephen Cade
4831 49 Avenue NW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada

*****

Dear Squad Leaders,

Well, it looks like you just can't please me. No sooner did I scream for more Bronze Tiger, you make him field commander, and now I feel sorry for poor old Rick Flag. I haven't seen callousness like Karin's since ... well, since real life.

Lots of other things to talk about, in fact. Like this Privateer character. I was all set to like him, and now I don't know. He's colorful. He's different. But he ticks me off already to a certain extent. My views on women are more closely aligned with Deadshot so this "a lady's wish should be as a command to a gentlemen" stuff doesn't

rub well with me. The Privateer is already owed a thumping so if Rick doesn't get the pleasure, have the Enchantress do it. That will make him an '80s man real fast.

The scene with Deadshot and Marnie was predictable, but the dialogue was frank and original for comics and the kiss was sudden. It took me a while to understand *why* Floyd stood up and kissed her. We're talking about a killer here who was shocked that this woman would dare strike him. I think it stimulated him.

I'm surprised Captain Boomerang hasn't got a 24-hour watch on him to prevent the sort of antics he pulled in ish #8. Don't they *know* him? How can they let him roam around unwatched? That doesn't make sense to me. And while speaking of Captain Boomie, let me say I disagree with the folks who don't want him in this book because he's a troublemaker. He is. But look at his track record. In the actual knock-down-drag-out battles who has proven *the* most effective? Who gets the job done quickly and efficiently? Why, Captain Boomerang! I cite him as possibly the most valuable member so far. He's a dork, but he's good.

Seth Edmund Bull
No Address Given

*****

Dear Robert, John, Luke, Bob, Todd and Carl,

SUICIDE SQUAD #8 ran two risks: the first was turning into a *M*A*S*H* letter home; the second was turning into a toothless variation of the disintegration of Dr. Malcolm Long in WATCHMEN. John Ostrander, happily, avoided both such fates—Simon LaGrieve's files were not simple snapshots of a group of people; we saw what he saw and more besides, which permitted us a greater opportunity to assess his conclusions. More importantly, the story ended with a husband and wife—I gather that the LaGrieves have been married for a good many happy years—going off to have an early breakfast.

You did quite a lot here: you brought in the colorful Privateer and had him "defend" Karin Grace; you stripped Rick Flag of command; you let Mrs. Waller blow her stack (more of her please, and more of Tolliver's slimy judgement); you confronted Deadshot with a woman who resented being thought "a pro" and who may make Floyd Lawton realize that he's been too hard on the fair sex; you made the Enchantress into a greater timebomb than before and—I loved this—you gave Digger Harkness a second identity as the new Mirror Master.

The creative team outdid themselves here—Luke and Bob rendered the Flag/Privateer fight beautifully; Carl's coloring of the Enchantress's transformation was magical; and John's script was so good that a jarring element—Madame Xanadu's spiel, which clashed with the more down-to-earth concerns of Deadshot's misogyny, Mrs. Waller's rage and Rick's losing battles—soon became a fascinating aspect of the story.

Keep up the good work—and, say, if the Squad will meet Justice League International and the Doom Patrol eventually, how about having them meet Rick Flag's last set of teammates, the Forgotten Heroes?

Charles J. Sperling
37-15 Parsons Boulevard Apt. 4C
Flushing, NY 11354

Not many of the Forgotten Heroes are still with us, Charles. Lessee, Immortal Man disappeared during the Crisis and the Crisis revised time so Rip Hunter never was a part of the team. Animal-Man and Dane Dorrance are slated for comebacks of their own later this year. Cave Carson will turn up in a mini-series sometime in the future plus show up in SECRET ORIGINS. There really isn't a team left except for Dolphin and who knows about her?

*****

Dear Bob,

I believe that SUICIDE SQUAD is one of the best comics in today's market. The concept is different and wonderfully fresh. John Ostrander is a brilliant writer. Luke McDonnell and Bob Lewis are a fantastic art team. The quality of this book is great. SS #8 is no exception.

The story is told from an interesting viewpoint, the Squad's psychiatrist. We learn how Dr. LaGrieve became involved with the Squad. Amanda is part of the person she is due to Dr. LaGrieve. I loved seeing her deck Toliver, who I didn't like since his appearance in FIRESTORM.

I am not sure if I like the inclusion of Privateer. I felt sorry for Flag when he took the beating. The man has had a lot of problems and he still has too many. Karin Grace is not helping much. I don't know if I could blame her, though. Taking Flag off of command duty will help him. It also allows one of my favorites, Bronze Tiger, to take over as field commander.

The temporary control over Enchantress is good, but as Madame Xanadu said, it could prove very dangerous. I hope June Moone survives. The budding relationship between Marnie Herrs and Deadshot is interesting.

I must confess, in the early stages of the Squad, I hated Captain Boomerang. Now the opposite is true! I love his "alter-ego" as Mirror Master. What a great idea!

My favorite Squad members are Bronze Tiger, Nightshade, and Black Orchid. Let's see some appearances by Vixen, Thunderbolt and Demon. How about a Challengers of the Unknown guest shot? Is Howard Chaykin going to be doing any more covers? When will the Black Orchid mini-series appear? When is Nightshade going to attempt to rescue her brother?

Justin Steiner
6450 West 1000 N
DeMotte, IN 46310

Vixen is here for good, but which Thunderbolt do you want? The Demon will be in his own Special later this year. The Challs are preparing a comeback so we won't be using them here. Howard is so busy with finishing the current BLACKHAWK Prestige Format mini-series, plus another top-secret DC project, that he can't come back to covers. Black Orchid gets her mini at the end of 1988, our Christmas present to you.

*****

COMING ATTRACTIONS

The covers here say it all: Justice League International and the Suicide Squad! It starts in a week and concludes in a month. Keith Giffen, J.M. DeMatteis and Al Gordon in one corner and the usual team in our corner. May the best team win but let's not forget that Nemesis' freedom hangs in the balance since this all takes place in Russia!

More mail and more good stuff next month so until then, keep smiling!

—Bob Greenberger

BEAST CHARMING
Perenially purveying a plenitude of purty, prettified pictures to my peerless pals!
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